

HCS SS SCS SB 30 -- AMBER ALERT

SPONSOR: Gross (Schneider)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 13 to 0.

This substitute creates the Amber Alert System to aid in the identification and location of abducted persons. An abducted person is one whose whereabouts are unknown and who is reasonably believed to be a victim of kidnaping. The Department of Public Safety will develop regions within the state for the program and will coordinate the program with local law enforcement agencies and broadcasters in each region. Participation in the system is optional for local law enforcement agencies and federally licensed radio and television broadcasters. If a local law enforcement agency decides not to participate and an abduction occurs in the jurisdiction, the local agency will notify the department, which will notify local media in the region.

The substitute requires the Amber Alert System to include all state agencies capable of providing information to the public, as well as broadcasters and other entities who volunteer to disseminate urgent public information. The department has the authority to notify other regions upon verification that the criteria established by the Amber Alert System Oversight Committee have been met. Making a false report of an abduction that results in an alert is a class A misdemeanor.

The substitute also establishes the Amber Alert System Oversight Committee within the department to develop criteria and procedures for the Amber Alert System. The substitute specifies the members of the oversight committee.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Net Cost to General Revenue Fund of \$8,180 in FY 2004, \$0 in FY 2005, and \$0 in FY 2006.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the substitute creates an effective and efficient system for abduction alerts. It also coordinates existing local plans.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Gross; Missouri Broadcasters Association; and Missouri Police Chiefs' Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Amy Woods, Legislative Analyst